



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
23 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0023

PAUL R. LEPAGE
GOVERNOR

ANGELA R. FAHERTY, Ph.D.
COMMISSIONER

EXHIBIT: # VI.A.

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Angela Faherty, Ph.D., Commissioner*

DATE: March 9, 2011

SUBJECT: Receipt of the Review Team Report Concerning the Application for Additional for Degree-Granting Authorization as Submitted by The New England School of Communications to Award the Bachelor of Science in Entertainment Production.

BACKGROUND: 20-A MRSA, § 10704 provides that a Maine postsecondary educational institution desiring to confer additional academic degrees must obtain authorization from the Maine State Board of Education.

The Maine Department of Education received an application from the New England School of Communications (NESCom), a fully owned subsidiary of Husson University, for authorization to offer an additional undergraduate degree, the Bachelor of Science in Entertainment Production (BSEP). The New England School of Communications has previously been authorized by the State Board to award the Bachelor of Science in Communications Technology and the Bachelor of Science in Media Studies. NESCom is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology (ACCSCT). ACCSCT is recognized by the US Secretary of Education as a nationally approved accrediting agency under the provisions of Chapter 33, Title 38, U.S. Code and subsequent legislation.

It is proposed that NESCom would deliver curriculum that will focus on the technical knowledge and skills that are needed “behind the scenes”, rather than on performance. The objective of the program is to graduate students who can flexibly apply entertainment technology across many venues. The proposed program was developed in response to the need for professionals who understand and can design and operate sound, light, sets, show management control and special effects.

The application stated that many industries use the design, fabrication and management skill sets formulated by the performing arts. The same design and construction techniques, traditionally associated with theatre, are now being employed in trade shows, amusement parks, casinos, rock concerts, cruise ships, shopping malls, the fashion industry, museums and exhibitions, television, sports contests, film and video production, and political conventions. By focusing on what these areas have in common, NESCom designed a degree program to serve a broad career sector.

The Board approved Review Team conducted an on-site visit December 10, 2010. Subsequently, the Team Report of Findings was compiled and has been assembled for distribution to Board members. Board action on the NESCom Team Report of Findings will appear as an agenda item during the Board's April meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: That the State Board of Education receive the Review Team Report of Findings concerning the request from NESCom to confer the additional degree of Bachelor of Science in Entertainment Production.

*Prepared by Harry Osgood
Higher Education Specialist